

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-11 EA-11 NEA-10 IO-12 ADP-00 AID-20

CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02 INR-09 NSAE-00

RSC-01 CIEP-02 STR-08 TRSE-00 LAB-06 SIL-01 SAL-01

OMB-01 OIC-04 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-14 PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-12

L-03 H-02 RSR-01 /203 W

----- 092847

R 191730 Z MAR 73

FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4892

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS UNN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ICFTU, ETRD, OAU, ILO, XA, XF, CA, CI, JA, US

SUBJ: ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY DISCUSSES VARIOUS ISSUES

REF: A. PARIS 4340 (NOTAL) B. ADDIS ABABA 2749 (NOTAL)
C. EC BRUSSELS 0666 (NOTAL) D. EC BRUSSELS 1411 (NOTAL)
E. NEW DELHI 2760 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: OTTO KERSTEN, ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY, DURING A TOUR D' HORIZON WITH THE MISSION' S LABOR ATTACHE AND OTHER BRUSSELS- BASED LABOR ATTACHES, TOOK SHARP ISSUE WITH RECENT AFL- CIO DECLARATIONS ON TRADE. HE ALSO DISCUSSED DIVISIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, THE IMPRISONMENT IN CANADA OF THREE TRADE UNION LEADERS, AFRICAN TRADE UNION UNITY, THE MIDDLE EAST AND OTHER ISSUES. END SUMMARY.

2. AFL- CIO " PROTECTIONISM". KERSTEN EXPRESSED GREAT CONCERN ABOUT WHAT HE CALLED AN INCREASINGLY " PROTECTIONIST" TENDENCY OF THE AFL- CIO. HE SAID THIS WAS EXEMPLIFIED BY RECENT AFL- CIO DECLARATIONS AND BY WHAT HE TERMED THE MORE FREQUENT USE OF " BUY AMERICAN" SLOGANS. HE SAID THAT THE ICFTU WAS OPPOSED TO PROTECTIONISM AND THAT ONLY THROUGH INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION COOPERATION CAN THESE PROBLEMS BE DEALT WITH EFFECTIVELY. KERSTEN ENDORSED A PROPOSAL BY ANDRE BERGERON, THE FRENCH FORCE OUVRIERE (FO) LEADER, WHICH CALLED FOR A MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND MONETARY QUESTIONS BETWEEN THE FO AND THE AFL- CIO (REF A). HOWEVER, HE SAID, THE ICFTU WOULD LIKE TO SEE PARTICIPATION IN ANY SUCH MEETING EXPANDED TO INCLUDE OTHER TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS AND SPECIFICALLY THE ICFTU.

3. DIVISIONS IN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION MOVEMENT. KERSTEN RECITED A LITANY OF COMPLAINTS ABOUT DIVISIONS AND QUARRELS WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION MOVEMENT WHICH WERE CAUSING THE ICFTU CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY. HE IS HIGHLY DISTURBED BY THE CONTEMPT FOR THE ICFTU WHICH AFL- CIO PRESIDENT GEORGE MEANY REPORTEDLY DEMONSTRATED DURING THE RECENT AFL- CIO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING IN MIAMI. HE IS ALSO UPSET ABOUT SEPARATE BILATERAL INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY NATIONAL TRADE UNION CENTERS. (WHILE HE MENTIONED THE GERMAN FREDRICH EBERT FOUNDATION, HIS MAIN TARGETS WERE AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS THE AALC AND THE AFLI.) MOREOVER, HE SAID THAT THERE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ARE RELENTLESS PRESSURES FROM MANY QUARTERS -- EUROPEAN, AFRICAN, ASIAN -- " TO BECOME MORE AUTONOMOUS" OF THE ICFTU. " PRETTY SOON", HE DECLARED, " WE WILL BE RETURNING TO (THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNIONISM) OF THE 19 TH CENTURY."

4. AFRICAN TRADE UNION UNITY. THE ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY SAID THE ICFTU FAVORS AFRICAN TRADE UNION UNITY BUT IS OPPOSED TO ANY FUTURE PAN AFRICAN TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION WHICH WOULD (A) BE FINANCIALLY DEPENDENT ON THE OAU OR (B) WHICH WOULD INSIST ON

DISAFFILIATION OF AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE ICFTU. KERSTEN LEAVES SHORTLY FOR TUNIS (WHERE HE IS ATTENDING THE UGTT CONGRESS MARCH 28-31) IN ORDER TO DISCUSS WITH THE ICFTU' S NEWLY RECONSTITUTED AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION (AFRO) ON APRIL 1-2 AN APPROPRIATE STRATEGY FOR THE PAN AFRICAN LABOR CONFERENCE, CURRENTLY SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 6 IN ADDIS ABABA (REF B).

5. MIDDLE EAST. WHILE IN TUNISIA, KERSTEN SAID HE WILL MEET WITH PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA AS WELL AS WITH ACHOUR AND OTHER UGTT LEADERS. HE INTENDS TO TAKE UP THE VISIT OF THE ICFTU DELEGATION TO ISRAEL (REF C). ALTHOUGH THE ARAB TERRORISTS, HE SAID, HAVE THREATENED TO MAKE ANY DELEGATION WHICH GOES TO ISRAEL A TARGET, KERSTEN BELIEVES THAT THE ARAB MODERATES HAVE BEEN STRENGTHENED FOLLOWING THE KHARTOUM MURDERS AND THIS THEREFORE INCREASED THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE ICFTU DELEGATION MIGHT YET GO TO ISRAEL. HE NOTED THAT HISTADRUT GENERAL SECRETARY BEN AHARON IS PREPARED TO " MEET THE NEEDS" OF ACHOUR WHICH MIGHT MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE LATTER TO PARTICIPATE. KERSTEN ALSO PLANS TO VISIT LEBANON MAY 24-27, WHERE HE WILL DISCUSS AFFILIATION OF THE LEBANESE PETROLEUM WORKERS UNION WITH THE ICFTU. IN REGARD TO CONTACTS, IN GENERAL, WITH THE ARAB TRADE UNION WORLD, KERSTEN DECLARED: " WE WOULD LIKE TO OPEN THE DOOR TO DISCUSSION WITH THE ARAB TRADE UNIONS AND TO INTENSIFY OUR ACTIONS WITH THEM, BUT WE DON' T WANT TO EXCLUDE ISRAEL."

6. IMPRISONMENT OF THREE CANADIAN TRADE UNION LEADERS. KERSTEN APPEARED TO BE SOMEWHAT ON THE DEFENSIVE ABOUT A WCL REQUEST FOR SUPPORT IN PROTESTING IMPRISONMENT OF THREE CANADIAN TRADE UNIONISTS (REF D) BY THE GOVERNMENT OF QUEBEC. HE SAID HE HAD VISITED DONALD MACDONALD, THE CANADIAN LABOR CONGRESS (CLC) LEADER WHO IS ALSO ICFTU PRESIDENT, ON MARCH 12 AND WAS CONVINCED THAT MACDONALD " WAS DOING EVERYTHING TO SECURE (THEIR) RELEASE." HE NOTED THAT ONE OF THE THREE IMPRISONED LEADERS WAS A CLC VICE PRESIDENT. KERSTEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EMPHASIZED THAT THE CLC DOES NOT WANT TO EXACERBATE TENSIONS BETWEEN THE FRANCOPHONES AND ANGLOPHONES IN CANADA -- A POSITION THE ICFTU SUPPORTS. HE ALSO NOTED THAT WHILE IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE ARRESTS WERE RELATED TO TRADE UNION ISSUES, THERE HAS NOT BEEN, IN FACT, A VIOLATION OF ILO CONVENTION 87 ON FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE ICFTU (UNLIKE THE WCL) HAS NOT MADE A FORMAL PROTEST THAT THE QUEBEC GOVERNMENT HAS VIOLATED CONVENTION 87, BUT THE ICFTU SUPPORTED A REQUEST FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WORKER GROUP, JOSEPH MORRIS, TO ILO DIRECTOR GENERAL JENKS THAT HE INTERCEDE IN THE AFFAIR. (THE WCL HAS CABLED QUEBEC PRIME MINISTER BOURASSA ASKING PERMISSION FOR WCL PRESIDENT MAURICE BOULADOUX TO VISIT THE THREE IMPRISONED TRADE UNIONISTS AND HAS ALSO REQUESTED A MEETING BETWEEN BOURASSA AND BOULADOUX.)

7. OTHER ISSUES. KERSTEN SAID THE CUT CONFERENCE ON MULTINATIONAL

COMPANIES IS IN ACTUALITY BEING RUN BY THE WFTU, WHICH IS SENDING
A LARGE STAFF TO CHILE (REF D). HE ALSO INDICATED COOLNESS TO A
SOHYO- SPONSORED CONFERENCE ON MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES (REF E)
BECAUSE HE BELIEVES THE ICFTU WOULD BE A MORE APPROPRIATE SPONSOR.
HE DOES NOT ACTUALLY OPPOSE THE CONFERENCE, HOWEVER, BUT " HAS NOT
ADVISED AFFILIATES TO PARTICIPATE" AND IS INSTRUCTING OCHIAI,
DIRECTOR OF THE ICFTU TOKYO OFFICE, TO LIMIT HIS ATTENDANCE
TO " PRESS OBSERVER."
DECON FOLLOWING MARCH 19, 1974.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 07 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: worrelsw
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973ECBRU01487
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: EC BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730348/abqceeui.tel
Line Count: 175
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. PARIS 4340 (NOTAL) B. ADDIS ABABA 2749 (NOTAL) C. EC BRUSSELS 0666 (NOTAL) D. EC BRUSSELS 1411 (NOTAL) E. NEW DELHI 2760 (NOTAL)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: worrelsw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25-Jul-2001 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <24-Aug-2001 by worrelsw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> wfs 980108
Subject: ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY DISCUSSES VARIOUS ISSUES
TAGS: ELAB, ETRD, CA, CI, JA, US, XA, XF, ICFTU, ILO, OAU
To: STATE INFO ADDIS ABABA
BEIRUT
BONN
BRUSSELS UNN
COPENHAGEN
DUBLIN

THE HAGUE
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LUXEMBOURG
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STOCKHOLM
TEL AVIV
TOKYO
TUNIS
YAOUNDE
GENEVA
NATO BRUSSELS
OECD PARIS UNN

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005